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ABSTRACT

Studied was the relationship between the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons (ATDP) scale and the Attitude Towards Handicapped Individuals (ATHI) scale. These scales were administered to 82 college students. Also determined was the coefficient of stability of the ATHI using a test-retest after 2 weeks with 54 Ss. The ATHI scale was thought to be more generally applicable than the ATDP due to differing terminology. A significant relationship was found to exist between the two instruments, and a significant coefficient of stability was found for the ATHI. (DB)

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ATDP AND ATHI SCALES FOR ASSESSING ATTITUDES

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ATDP AND ATHI SCALES FOR ASSESSING ATTITUDES

A select review of the literature concerning attitudes toward the handicapped and gifted during the past decade indicates a growing number of studies as interest in this area grows. This assertion is supported to some degree by the recent reviews on the disabled, (Yuker, Block, and Youung, 1970) the gifted (Lazar, Gensley, and Gowan, 1972) and mentally retarded, (Harth, 1973). One critical problem that is becoming evident is that many instruments are being developed and utilized without no effort toward establishing validity and reliability. Failure to do so seriously limits the utility of such instrumentation and the value of their findings must be interpreted with great caution and suspect. Nunnally (1967) has indicated that the serious researcher should make efforts at the validation of his instrumentation. Thus, the effort of this study will be toward the development of some validation effort toward the Attitude Towards Handicapped Individuals scale (ATHI).

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to to determine the relationship between the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale (ATDP) and the ATHI. A second effort was to determine the coefficient of stability (test-retest) for the ATHI scale. It was felt that such effort along with other studies being conducted with the ATHI scale might start to shed some data as to the value of the instrument in terms of validity and reliability.

METHOD & PROCEDURE

SUBJECTS: The subjects used for this study were students in three university level educational social foundation courses being taught by the same instructor. To study the relationship between the two instruments three classes of 82 S_S were used, while for the study concerning the coefficient of stability only two of the classes were used yielding 54 S_S. A holiday made it necessary to drop one class because the retest time period would not have been consistent for all three groups.

INSTRUMENTS: The ATDP is reported to measure attitudes toward disabled persons in general according to it's authors (Yuker, Block, and Youung, 1970). A low score on this instrument indicates that the respondent perceives disabled persons as different, while a high score indicates that the respondent perceives the disabled person as not being different. It could also be interpreted to mean that the low scores indicate less acceptance and understanding, whereas high scores reflect acceptance and understanding. The ATDP Form 0 is made up of twenty items, with each item being rated on a six point Likert type scale ranging from -3 meaning I disagree very much, -2 meaning I disagree pretty much, -1 meaning I disagree a little, to + 1 meaning I agree a little, +2 meaning I agree pretty much, and +3 meaning I agree very much. There is a possible score range of 0 to 120. Shaw and Wright (1967) in their critical review of attitude scales have indicated

that the ATDP had better supporting data than most scales, and despite some question concerning validity, it was recommend for research purposes. Eight estimates of stability for the ATDP have been reported, ranging from +.66 to +.89 with a median of +.73 (Yuker, Block, and Youung, 1970). The time intervals ranged from two weeks tp eighteen months.

The ATHI scale is basically a modification of the ATDP in that the term "handicapped" was substituted for the term "disabled". It has the same number of items and is scored in the same manner as the ATDP. The rationale for this change was to give the ATHI an even more general meaning than the concept "disabled" would allow. In using the ATDP it was found that the reaction of many individuals taking the instrument was that it was to restrictive because of the term "disabled". Thus, it was felt that the term "handicapped" might be more general in nature, and lend itself to the study of attitudes toward other exceptional groups beside the physically disabled per se.

Administration: Both instruments were administered by the senior author as group tests, with all procedures being uniformed for all classes on both the pretest and posttest. The retest with the ATHI was two weeks later. Both instruments require about 20 minutes each to administer.

RESULTS

Product-moment correlations were computed for both questions being studied. In Table 1 a correlation of .802 was obtained in the study

of the relationship between the ATDP and ATHI scales, that is significant at the .01 level. It appears that regardless of term used, both instruments are measuring pretty much the same attitude. In Table 2 a coefficient of stability (test-retest) of .732 was obtained using a two week separation between test and retest for the ATHI scale. This compares to be the same as the median given by Yuker, Block, and Youung (1970), for their ATDP scale. Before any generalizations can be advanced, it is apparent that further research will be needed with the ATHI.

DISCUSSION

While a significant relationship was found to exist between the two instruments, and even though it appears that they both are measuring pretty much the same attitude, there is still sufficient difference that some difference also exists. It would be interesting to see if different professional samples might not register some basic differences between the two scales. Further study might be stressed to see if the nature of these semantic differences might not be ascertained.

While the coefficent of stability for the ATHI was significant at the .01 level, this finding must be taken with reservation in light of some weaknesses inherent in the test-retest paradigm per se. It is recommended that in future studies the split half or the Kuder-Richardson formulas 20 and 21 be utilized.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was twofold, to study the relationship between the ATDP and ATHI scales, and to determine the coefficient of stability for the ATHI scale. A significant relationship was found to exist between the two instruments, and a significant coefficient of stability was found for the ATHI using a test-retest after two weeks. While the initial results look promising, more research will be needed to ascertain any claims of validity and reliability for the ATHI.

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TABLE 1.

The Relationship Between the
ATHI and ATDP Scales

TEST	N	MEAN	s.d.	r.	p.
ATHI	82	81.11	15.76	.802	.01
ATDP	82	79.04	15.04		

TABLE 2.

Two Week Test-Retest
ATHI Scale

TEST	N	MEAN	s.d.	r.	p.
ATHI Test	54	82.18	14.61	.732	.01
ATHI Retest	54	81.62	14.08		